

New law enacts the Electronic Health Records Loan Program Act and provides for legislative intent.

New law authorizes the secretary to establish the Electronic Health Records Loan Program utilizing sums made available through:

- (a) Annual appropriation;
- (b) A public/private partnership involving financial institutions;
- (c) Any other method authorized by law.

New law provides that such funding shall be used by the state to satisfy the federal match requirements of the loan program provisions of ARRA.

Provides that all loan program funds shall be administered by the department and provides that to the extent permitted by law, the debt service associated with loans made to eligible providers shall be serviced from funds received by such providers as enhanced reimbursements under ARRA.

New law provides the department shall assist the state in preparing competitive grant applications and other required submissions to secure funding under the ARRA loan program provisions.

Authorizes the secretary to enter into cooperative endeavor agreements necessary to facilitate access to ARRA loan funding and to make loans to eligible providers to provide for acquisition and implementation of certified electronic health record technology by eligible providers, and where integrated, telemedicine technology.

New law, to provide for the expansion and administration of LARHIX and other related matters, requires the secretary to enter into a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Rural Hospital Coalition, Inc., the terms of which are to govern the loans made to rural hospitals and, with the secretary's approval, to other rural health care providers who have elected to partner with rural hospitals in the acquisition of certified EHR technology. Provides that to the extent permitted by ARRA, certified EHR technology includes telemedicine technology which is fully integrated with the certified EHR technology acquired by the hospital.

Authorizes the secretary to consult with the Louisiana Healthcare Quality Forum in administering the program.

Effective July 1, 2009.

(Adds R.S. 40:1299.97.1-1299.97.4)